



# ACE ON TASK

## President's Message by Karen Houck

Attacks on teachers are nothing new, but it is surprising when it comes from an ally. Recently, Assemblywoman Wilmer Amina Carter (AD62) posted comments on her facebook page that indicate she supports the requirements of Race to the Top (RTTT) put forward by Secretary of Education Arne Duncan and President Obama. She is on the Education Committee and has long been a supporter of teachers and has fought attacks against us in the past. Now, she has indicated she would support the very things we have been fighting; linking student achievement to evaluations and pay.

Assemblywoman Carter and others are busy trying to change the lives and livelihood of California Teachers and haven't answered all of the questions. How do you evaluate teachers who don't have students in core subject areas like PE and electives? Will Special Ed. teachers get a sliding scale based on their students' IEPs? What about support staff

like counselors, nurses, speech therapist, psychologists, TOAs, and CPSs? What is the cost to implement the changes vs. the amount of the grant?

There is only \$4.35 billion available for distribution to 10 states. If it were granted equally and California won the grant, that would mean \$435 million for our state. While we could certainly use the boost to the general fund, it is only one-time money. Considering there are approximately 400,000 teachers in California, that isn't much per teacher to drive the reform that is proposed. The four main areas of reform are teacher effectiveness, standards and assessments, data systems, and struggling schools. CTA is busy crunching the numbers to determine how much it would cost to fully implement each of these reforms and preliminary data far exceeds the actual award of the grant. Just two of the four components would cost a billion dollars, about twice as much as we might receive.

Your site reps are bringing back information for you to get involved. There are letters to write to Assemblywoman Carter, Secretary Duncan and President Obama. You can also befriend her on facebook and join the discussion there (she has asked for feedback). We will also be asking you to attend a rally outside of Assemblywoman Carter's office in the coming weeks. We want her to know that while we support high achievement on tests and well performing students, there is research to support that multiple measures is the best strategy. Tying a teacher's evaluation or pay to a single test score is not the best approach to achievement. Having seen some of the creative displays of bubbling on the STAR test, I shudder to think that could be used against a teacher. If that happens, who will want to teach our most needy students?

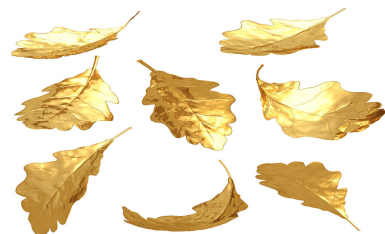
## Association of Colton Educators ACE/CTA/NEA

Issue 3

October 2009

### ACE Executive Board

President	Karen Houck
Vice President	Robert Lemoine
Secretary	Rebekah Acord
Treasurer	Allen O'Neill
Elem Dir	Bernadette Pedroza
Elem Dir	Arlene Roper
Elem Dir	Steve Villa
Elem Dir	Linda Placencia
Mid. Sch Dir	Paul Lucero
Mid. Sch Dir	John Chovan
Sr, High Dir	Erwin Schaefer
Sr, High Dir	Marcella Cook
PPS Dir	Georgene Dixon
State Council	Paul Lucero
State Council	Rebekah Acord
State Council	Dona Hines



## State Council by Rebekah Acord

The weekend of October 23<sup>rd</sup> should prove to be interesting. It is the first state council of the present school year. As you may remember, these meetings take place four times a year. This meeting is almost sure to be focused on the state budget and

the Race To The Top. If you haven't heard, RTTT is just the latest attack on public education. In order for our state to even be considered for these funds, teachers' pay has to be tied to test scores. Our state has decided to go ahead and try for this money.

What most people don't know is that there is no return for the money. It will cost billions to enact which is far more than our state may receive, if it even receives these monies in the end. Please be sure to let our Governor know your thoughts on this issue.

## Meet Patt Haro, School Board Member by LynnMary Toscano

I have had the honor of serving with Mrs. Haro on the Strategy 6 implementation committee that plans ways to build character throughout the district. After one of our committee meetings, she agreed to join me for an informal dinner with Mr. Irwin Schaefer, ACE high school director, to discuss her goals for our district. Mr. Schaefer and I discovered that one important objective of hers is to find better ways to communicate. Mrs. Haro feels that understanding the needs of our district contributes to informed decision-making. When interacting with parents, students and CJUSD employees, she can identify their needs by listening and asking questions.

That is why she is visible at many school and community events. I was not surprised to see her mingle with parents, students, and teachers at the Rogers Elementary back-to-school

night. While visiting the school, she shared her experience participating in community functions where she has noticed that a growing number of parents are involved in their children's education and social activities. She realizes that both parents and teachers are very concerned about their children's educational prospects especially in today's uncertain economic atmosphere. She agrees opportunities are disappearing that make a difference in our students' ability to succeed.

For example, she believes that our district should provide funding for field trips and activities that enhance and expand each student's view of the world. She encourages students to participate in competitions such as the science fair because she considers these types of activities vital to our students' education. In addition, she supports ways to improve parking because she has experienced the difficulties at many

schools for safe access to our campuses. She also promotes the virtues of small class size because she is aware that offering this is in the best interest of our students.

It is evident that her votes are based on information expressed by the community and staff members. While some board members choose to cut educator's assignments and student programs while blaming teachers for these unconscionable decisions, Patt Haro remains firm in her resolve to provide the best education for our students. She voted "No" when faced with the question of slashing certificated staff. She is aware that keeping a variety of teaching assignments means offering choices for our students to explore. Thank you, Mrs. Haro, we appreciate your vision, support and good judgment in meeting the needs of students, teachers and our community.

## Another School Year by Rebekah Acord

It seems that this school year has barely started, yet it feels like it should be April or May. This is a tough year so far! We have the usual problems with class overcrowding and being asked to do more with very few resources. I recently read an editorial in a local newspaper about teaching. The person who had written it was very astute. In response to an article written about how terrible our schools are and how teachers are lazy, and our state test scores still lagging behind those in some other

He stated that teachers are expected to "cure" students responsible for that patient's prognosis without having control over whether or not that person follows the regimen suggested by the physician. As I read this article, I thought "this person really understands!" I think that our district has a lot to be proud about given the fact that even with these insurmountable odds, we pulled off a great increase in our state test scores!

## Being A Member of the Union by Dona Hines

The first year of anything is always difficult, the first year of marriage, the first year of being a teacher, the first year of having a baby etc. The first year I became a site rep was a blur, with monthly meetings, periodic campus meetings with staff and my first fall leadership conference. It was at the leadership conference, when I went to the New Rep workshop, that I saw a video that showed the struggles teachers made many years ago to make teaching a respected profession that was paid a decent salary. "You've come a long way baby," is an understatement. Although teaching is a noble profession, we have paid big money and many hours to obtain our education to rightfully be in this profession. So why are so many teachers so willing to work for free? When a teacher undermines their contract, they are saying that their rights and the contract that we have signed, and our unions have fought for, mean nothing. If we were in the corporate world, with the education we have, we would make much more money and we would-

n't have to use part of our paycheck to do our job. How many CEOs buy his or her own supplies? How often in an office setting do they have to worry that there might not be toilet paper, or soap, or paper towels, in the restroom or enough paper to make copies? The first things cut in budgets are the bare necessities of campus life in a school setting. Don't we sacrifice enough? Don't be willing to have more students on your class role than is contractual, we fought to make class size reasonable, in fact, how do you feel you are helping your students when there are so many? Given the extreme learning levels, we should have far less students in our class rooms. Children are not products on an assembly line. To the district, the more students, the more revenue. The less teachers, the less they have to spend. They can't honestly claim to care about our students when they don't care if we have manageable class sizes. We hear "raise the test scores, lower the drop out rate," yet

"we need to increase class sizes."  
"Hello, you can't have your cake and eat it too."

As a "member" of the union, U are a part of the Union. Your site reps are just liaisons. We are volunteers who attend the meetings and report back to the rest of the "members" and when you let us know, take your concerns to the executive board. So when we have a meeting on campus, it is to inform you and to get your input, because you are a part of this. When we ask for your emails and a contact number, some of you act like you don't want to be bothered, yet when there is a crisis, you get upset because you didn't know, or didn't have a say in it.

I have written all this to say...don't fight your union. Your union is your ally. Your union was formed as an advocate FOR YOU. It is a voice, a strong voice that fights for you. So, get involved and share your thoughts, just don't try to shout over it, please.

## Health News: Transparency by Arlene Roper

One of the problems with Health Care today is finding out how much a procedure or treatment actually costs. If you are a Delta Dental member you get statements that list the charge of a dental procedure and then how much Delta will pay for that procedure. You'll notice that you don't have to pay the difference to the dentist unless you are not at 100% coverage, then you have to pay your percentage. This happens with all of the Medical groups as well. According to a doctor from Beaver Medical in Redlands, the reason you don't pay the difference is because the

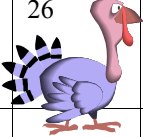


HMO and the Medical group or hospital negotiate the price. Beaver may have 200 different Blue Shield plans alone. So they bill high and hope that your specific plan reimburses close to the billing. The actual cost is never what they say it is the first time around.

In addition, Blue Shield is fairly good about providing the Trust costs and telling us where the money is going. We know what hospitals are getting. We know what we're spending on ER visits and so on. Not all HMOs give those costs to

their members. Kaiser hasn't been forthcoming with that information. However, even Blue Shield doesn't tell us where about 20% of our premiums go and they don't want to. That's about a half a million dollars that we can't connect directly to patient care or to exact expenses. If we are going to have Health Care Reform, we need to have transparency of cost. We need to know where our money is going and how much procedures and tests actually cost. As the state and national government continue their work, look for "Transparency" in their plans.

# ACE Calendar November 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6 EMLD reception	7 EMLD training
8	9 Exec. Board Mtg.	10	11 Veteran's Day	12	13	14
15	16 Rep Council Mtg.	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26 	27	28
29	30					

## Special Events

### ELEMENTARY:

ENJOY YOUR TIME OFF!

- November 6-7: EMLD Training
- November 9: Exec. Board Mtg.
- November 11: NO SCHOOL  
Veteran's Day
- November 16: Rep Council Mtg.
- November 23-27: NO SCHOOL  
Thanksgiving Break

## School Board Members

GO SCHOOL BOARD! At the School Board meeting on Thursday, October 15, the Board directed the District to drop the pursuit of going back to Year Round School. So, the empty threats of the District to return to YRE if (when) they lose the arbitration on class size fall. Thank you Board members for seeing clearly and directing Administration to figure out a solution OTHER than "worst-case scenario." Kudos to you.

## Member Benefits

Your membership in CTA entitles you to a number of additional benefits. TSA, a subsidiary of First Financial Credit Union, offers discounted tickets to a variety of savings for Disneyland, Knott's Berry Farm, Legoland, Medieval Times Dinner and Tournament, Pirates Dinner Adventure, Movie Tickets (AMC Cinemas, Regal, Edwards, United Artist and Pacific Theaters), SeaWorld, Universal Studios Hollywood, San Diego Wild Animal Park and San Diego Zoo. Also available are See's Candy Gift Certificates. For a complete list of availability, prices, and service charges, call (800) 537-8491 or visit their website at [www.tsaspecialservices.com](http://www.tsaspecialservices.com)

## CONTRACT CORNER

### Article 8: Hours of Employment

According to section 8.1, all unit members who are assigned a full teaching schedule shall have a planning time. This is YOUR prep. It is YOUR duty-free prep period. Make sure you are using it to plan, not letting your administrator schedule meetings, IEPs, etc. This time is for YOU to determine what needs to be done to best serve the needs of your students.

**If your rights are being violated, see your Rep on campus and FILE THAT GREIVANCE!**

ACE ON TASK is a publication of the Association of Colton Educators  
190 W. H St #101 Colton, CA 92324 (909) 825-0332  
[aceteach@aol.com](mailto:aceteach@aol.com)  
Edited by: Robert Lemoine and Rebekah Acord and published once monthly for the Representative Council and its membership.